

Living with Wildlife

Wildlife is an important part of our environment. While these animals are seldom a threat to people or domestic animals, there are things you can do to prevent problems before they arise. Taking precautions now may save inconvenience for you and possibly prevent the death of a wild animal.

There are several steps you can take to discourage wild animals from becoming a recurring problem.

Securing Your Home: Check your house and garage carefully for openings. Chimneys should be securely covered with wire screen that has been bolted down. If an animal is living in your chimney, NEVER TRY TO SMOKE IT OUT! If it is overcome by smoke, it may fall into the fire. Try putting a dish of ammonia inside the base of the chimney and open the damper 1/2 inch. The fumes from the ammonia should force the animal out the top of the chimney.

Attics: Check vents, gables and eaves to be certain screens are secure. If there is already an animal in the attic, scatter mothballs around the perimeter of the attic. The odor should encourage the animal to leave. Be sure all animals, especially babies, are gone before closing the opening.

Dryer Vents, Exhaust Fans and Pipes: Be sure screening is securely fastened around vents and fans. Remove any nests prior to screening to prevent fires. Space between pipes and walls can be stuffed with coarse steel wool which is also effective in keeping out bats.

Gardens: Sprinkle the plants with Epsom salts or scatter mothballs around the perimeter of the garden. Rags soaked in ammonia and placed on posts around the garden will also deter many visitors. Sprinkle lawn and garden with cayenne pepper to discourage digging for grubs.

Other Suggestions: Never leave pet food outdoors. If you feed your pet outside, be sure all uneaten food is removed. Store animal food in sturdy, tightly closed containers.

If you have rabbits and chickens, keep them securely caged, especially at night. These animals are favorite targets of raccoons and cats.

Don't scatter food for birds or squirrels in your yard. This only attracts other animals. Instead, put bird food in proper containers.